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## Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 37, no. 4)

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# The Kentucky Warbler

(Published by the Kentucky Ornithological Society)

Vol. XXXVII

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Nest of a Traill's Flycatcher, at Louisville, July 22, 1961.

From Kodachrome by Frederick W. Stamm

(See Photograph on Page 80)

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## IN THIS ISSUE

NEWS AND VIEWS .....	62
TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER IN KENTUCKY, Joseph Croft .....	63
SOME SUMMER NOTES FROM THE KENTUCKY MOUNTAINS Anne L. Stamm .....	70
THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL FALL MEETING .....	74
FIELD NOTES:	
Barn Swallows Use Nest Six Consecutive Years, Charles S. Guthrie .....	80

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## THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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## NEWS AND VIEWS

Mrs. Paul L. Garrett, long a member of K. O. S., died this summer. In addition to her interest in birds, she was an authority on flowers, especially daffodils, and served as judge in flower shows all over America. In her later years she transformed the campus of Western State College with her knowledge of trees, shrubs, and flowers.

\* \* \*

Our newest group, the Murray Chapter (Murray Bird Club) is busy at work conducting field trips, meetings, etc., and making real progress in building up a splendid membership of active individuals. Mrs. Hunter M. Hancock is secretary, Clell Peterson is president, with Dr. Hunter Hancock acting as advisory counselor.

## TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER IN KENTUCKY

By Joseph Croft, Louisville

Traill's (Alder) Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) has had a curious position in the ornithological history of Kentucky. Discovered as a summer bird in the extreme southwestern part of the state in 1886 by L. Otley Pindar, the species soon thereafter virtually disappears from the records of Kentucky birds. Not until the summer of 1937, when this flycatcher was observed in a swamp near Louisville by Burt L. Monroe and Robert M. Mengel, are there further reports of its probable breeding in the state; and records in the migration season are very meager. The purpose of this paper is to summarize the known distribution of this bird in Kentucky and neighboring areas, and to bring the Kentucky record up to date with a report of observations made in the Louisville area during the years 1956 to 1961, together with an account of what appears to be the first definitely identified nest reported for the state.

### Previous Kentucky Records

Pindar's discovery of Traill's Flycatcher in Fulton County was first reported in *The Agassiz Companion* in 1886. Considering the difficulty of access to this journal and the interest of Pindar's observations, his note is here quoted in full:

The bird whose name heads this article [Traill's Flycatcher], is a summer resident here — arrives on the 16th of May, and departs for a warmer region on the 10th of October. This flycatcher is common here, but is easily overlooked. At least it seemg (*sic*) to be, for I have never heard but two or three people speak of it and most people have never seen it. It generally sits on the top of a broken iron-weed, or on the extreme end of a slender limb from which it makes its sallies after its insect prey. I have seen it snatch insects from the water. It is a successful dodger, and I have often seen boys shoot at it with slingshots, or throw stones at it, and I never saw one killed yet with those weapons. It always flies up or down, or to one side just as the stone gets to it, and immediately returns.

The nest of this bird is a pretty structure, though Davis, in his Key, says it is more slovenly built than that of the Acadian. I have never found its nest, but I have a set of three eggs which were collected on the ninth of May, 1886, in Plymouth, Wayne Co., Mich., by Mr. James Purdy. Incubation fresh. The nest was a very compact edifice in the fork of an oak tree thirty feet high. The eggs exhibit the following markings:

No. 1 is rather round, cream color (*sic*), with reddish-brown spots at large end. No. 2 is similar but the spots are more numerous. No. 3 is like No. 2 in color but is a longer egg.

It may be noted here that, while Traill's Flycatcher is known to show considerable variation in the placing of its nest, a fork 30 feet high in an oak is a rather unusual place for its nest. May 9 is likewise an unusually early date for a full clutch of eggs for this species. Of a total of 71 egg dates summarized in Bent (1942:213) for the eastern part of the country, from Illinois, Maine, and New York, the earliest date is a May 15 record from Maine. The description of the eggs, however, fits perfectly this species, and it seems clear from a note appearing in 1888 in *The Hawkeye Ornithologist and Oologist* that Purdy had had considerable experience with the species.

Pindar's next mention of this species appears in a note published in 1888 in *The Hawkeye Ornithologist and Oologist*. Here he lists Traill's Flycatcher as "A common summer resident" and goes on to say, "I found an empty nest which I take to be of this species at this place [Hickman] last year." In Pindar's next publication in this journal he says, "An error crept into my last paper . . . I have set down the kingbird as 'not so

common as the next species,' viz., Traill's flycatcher. The kingbird is much more common. The Traill's was much rarer in 1887 than 1886, why, I know not. I hope for an increase of this species in 1888." In two later papers on the birds of Fulton County (1889, 1925) he lists this species as common in migration and rare in summer. In a subsequent paper on the spring and summer birds of Harrison County (1926) he regards the species as a rare migrant.

Apparently the next major reference to Traill's Flycatcher in Kentucky comes in 1948, when Monroe and Mengel published a note recording the presence of this species near Louisville during the summers of 1937 and 1938, and the discovery of four young out of the nest on July 30, 1938. No nest was found in either year, however, and "The birds did not return in the spring of 1939, nor have they been found here since then." In the Monroes' recent list of the birds of the Louisville region (1961:34), the status of Traill's Flycatcher is given as "Migrant and summer resident: rare in migration, very rare in summer; known breeding in Caperton's Swamp, Indian Hills, 1937-1938, and probable breeding there 1956-1958." The latter observations will be discussed later in this paper. It might be noted here that the earliest spring date of May 12 given in this recent list is surpassed by Monroe's and Mengel's initial discovery of this flycatcher on May 4, 1937, as reported in their 1948 publication.

Other Kentucky references to this species are few. Gordon Wilson's compilation (1942) of the breeding birds of 15 localities scattered through the state lists the species for Louisville only, where it is listed as rare on the basis of the records cited above. There appear to be only two other published indications of its presence in summer. In Rhoads and Benson's paper on the birds of Audubon State Park, the Alder Flycatcher is included in the list of nesting species (1956:30), but no details are given. On June 1, 1958, Herndon (1958a) recorded a Traill's singing in Jackson County, probably on breeding territory.

The only additional published Kentucky records of Traill's Flycatcher appear to be several included in the *Warbler's* annual "Big Spring Lists." Since 1945, when these lists were first published, the species has been reported from Murray (1945, 1947), Providence (1945, 1951), Henderson (1955-1959, 1961), Bowling Green (1957; Wilson, 1957), and Mammoth Cave (1959). These records range from April 26 (1945, Providence) to May 11 (1957, Bowling Green).

#### Extension of Eastern Range

In the latest edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-List of North American Birds (1957), the southern limits of the eastern breeding range of Traill's Flycatcher are defined as southern Illinois, southern Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, southeastern Pennsylvania, and thence northeastward to Massachusetts. Observations reported in *Audubon Field Notes* for recent years make it clear that this flycatcher is extending its range considerably beyond those limits.

First, however, it should be noted that in the past there have been several marginal records of this species in summer. In the summer of 1946, Stevenson (1947) found the species in southwestern Virginia, near Abingdon. This area is about 50 miles from the nearest part of the Kentucky line. It may also be noted that, in extreme southwestern Ohio, Kemsies and Randle (1953) say of Traill's:

A fairly common nesting species around bodies of water, with an ever-increasing tendency to extend its nesting range a considerable distance from water into fields and along dry roadsides.

Ten years ago this species was considered a rare migrant in this area. The first suspected breeding record was a July 4, 1931 record of the species by Maslowski. The increase of this bird in our area during the last ten years has been nothing short of phenomenal.

Reports in **Audubon Field Notes** indicate that the recent expansion of Traill's breeding range has accompanied the increasing abundance of the species in many parts of the previously occupied breeding area. For example, Brooks (1955:378) reports one observer's conclusion that Traill's "is now the most abundant of the flycatchers in northern Ohio." In the same article Brooks says that the species in 1955 was reported "locally abundant in Jefferson Co., W. Va., at elevations of about 500 feet," whereas formerly it had been thought "restricted to a few high mountain bogs in West Virginia." The breeding season of 1956 brought further indications of a range extension in the Appalachian region (Breiding, 1956:384).

The most unusual record of this species reported for the 1956 breeding season, however, was the discovery of four pairs of Traill's near North Wilkesboro, North Carolina (Smith and Stevenson, 1958). One male was collected on June 13, and on July 1 the young of one pair were heard calling. The following year Smith found four pairs in the same general area; again, indications of young were observed, but no nest was found (Chamberlain, 1957:398). In 1958 Smith again found two pairs of Traill's at North Wilkesboro, but no nest was discovered (Chamberlain, 1958:404).

The summer of 1958 also found Traill's Flycatcher breeding for the first time in two other southeastern states. After the first spring specimen for Georgia had been collected at Atlanta on May 4 by Phillip Kahl and William W. Griffin, at least three Traill's "were heard singing on territory." On June 1, Griffin "discovered a nest under construction; 3 eggs were laid." (Chamberlain, 1958:404). Then, on June 22, Herndon and H. P. Langridge established the first breeding records for Tennessee with the discovery of three nests in a swampy area near Elizabethton (Herndon, 1958b). Young were fledged from all three nests by July 21.

The breeding season of 1959 found this flycatcher again occupying its newly acquired breeding grounds in Tennessee and Georgia. Two nests were found near Elizabethton (Herndon, 1959), and two others at Atlanta (Chamberlain, 1959:425). At North Wilkesboro, North Carolina, two pairs were again reported nesting (Chamberlain, loc. cit.). Meanwhile, to the northeast, the discovery of a nest with two eggs, later abandoned, established Traill's as a nesting bird in the District of Columbia (Scott and Potter, 1959:423).

In 1960, for the fifth consecutive year, Smith found the species near North Wilkesboro, where two pairs were again observed (Chamberlain, 1960:443). For the third consecutive year Traill's nested near Elizabethton, where a total of eight nests were found. Three of these nests were at a new location, and another singing bird was observed at a third location (Herndon, 1960). There was no report from Atlanta.

These records clearly show that for the past several years Traill's Flycatcher has been extending its breeding range at an explosive rate. The evidence indicates that this species is now becoming established as a breeding bird in Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia, all areas south of the breeding range as outlined in the Check-List.

## Observations at Louisville, 1956-1961

On the morning of May 13, 1956, Eric Mills, Haven Wiley, and I were looking for migrants in the Caperton's Swamp area. As we worked along the edge of one of the ponds, we were surprised to hear the explosive *fitz-bew* song of Traill's Flycatcher coming from the vicinity of a willow thicket. At the time we naturally considered this bird a transient visitor. When I visited the area a month later, however, on June 17, a Traill's was singing from the topmost branches of a 30-foot dead tree in the same area. This tree stood alongside a private drive and at the edge of a dense bushy thicket, between one of the ponds and a small marshy area. A non-singing bird, presumably a female, was also present. During the next three weeks I frequently visited the swamp, in hopes of discovering a nest. Although the male flycatcher made frequent flights from its singing perch down into the thicket, very often disappearing into the same spot, several intensive searches of the entire thicket failed to disclose a nest. About the first of July, this bird, which had formerly been so conspicuous as it sang from its exposed perch, became very quiet and difficult to observe, and the last time I saw it was on July 4.

Traill's Flycatcher appeared in the area again the following year. On May 18, 1957, I observed five of these flycatchers singing in the willows. One of these birds sang the same *fitz-bew* song of the previous year's bird, while the other four had a somewhat different and longer song, though of the same "sneezy" quality. Unfortunately, I am unable to give any detailed notes on these variant songs. In late June a Traill's was occupying the same singing perch as had been used the year before, and a presumed female was again present. On one occasion one of the birds was observed carrying grasses, but no nest could be found.

In 1958 I did not visit the Caperton's Swamp area from early May until mid-June. On June 12 a singing Traill's was located at the same spot for the third consecutive year. I was unable to find this bird in the area after late June, however. The only subsequent observation that year was on July 12, when a Traill's was heard to sing briefly from a brushy area along the Middle Fork of Beargrass Creek, about a quarter of a mile from the regular territory.

The summer of 1959 passed without any observations of Traill's Flycatcher. In 1960 again I was unable to locate the species around Caperton's Swamp. On July 31 of that year, however, Haven Wiley and I observed two *Empidonax* flycatchers in one of the willow thickets at the Falls of the Ohio. Although the birds were not heard to sing, the date and habitat leave little doubt that they were Traill's. They were seen again on August 13.

The summer of 1961 brought Traill's Flycatcher to the Louisville area in force, and the breeding of the species was finally established by the finding of an occupied nest. On the evening of June 4, shortly after returning from school for the summer, I was searching through the marshy area lying between Indian Hills Trail and the Louisville Country Club Road. This area is only a few hundred yards from where Traill's Flycatcher occurred in the summers of 1956 to 1958. While I was examining a strange-looking bird which turned out to be a Java Sparrow (*Munia oryzivora*), obviously an escaped cage bird, my ear was caught by the unmistakable *fitz-bew* of Traill's Flycatcher. A few minutes' search showed that at least two birds, possibly three, were present.

This area was kept under observation, and a careful but fruitless

search for the nest was made on several dates. Finally, on July 13, as I entered the marshy area, one of the flycatchers gave an excited call from the far side of a clump of willows. I selected a nearby group of small maple saplings as the most suitable place for the bird's nest, and upon looking into the foliage found a compact and beautifully constructed nest containing three eggs. The nest was built in a fork about three feet from the ground, in a sapling about eight feet tall, and was well shielded from above by the foliage. The eggs were of a creamy buff color with a scattering of darker spots around the large end.

On July 19, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Stamm and I visited the nest, which now contained one newly-hatched young bird and the remaining two eggs. The male flycatcher sang several times from a willow about 10 yards from the nest. On July 22 we returned and found three young in the nest. The young were an orange color with some grayish down; their eyes were still closed. One of the adult birds was observed carrying food. No song was heard on this visit. Mr. Stamm took a number of slides of the nest and young and of the nesting habitat. On July 28 the Stammes visited the nest to take additional photographs. On this date the feathers of the young had still not shot from the sheaths, but the eyes were open. Mrs. Stamm banded two of the nestlings, which gave soft, twittering, scarcely audible notes as she held them in her hand. The following afternoon Mrs. Stamm and I stopped at the nest and saw that all three young were still there. The nesting site was not visited again until August 23, when the nest was empty and no young flycatchers could be found in the area, although one adult was seen flitting among the willows.

The nesting area was a large marshy field, much of which is planted in corn in dry seasons. This year, however, there was standing water in some part of the field throughout the summer, and no cultivation was attempted. Part of the area was grown up in cattails and willows, with a few maple saplings. There was a rank growth of such weeds as burdock, pigweed, Spanish needles, smartweed, and sorrel. The immediate vicinity of the nest was grown up with such vegetation, including a scattered growth of cattails. About 20 feet away and on the other side of a small drainage ditch was a willow thicket. One particularly tall willow in this thicket was frequently used as a lookout perch by the flycatcher. The ground about the nest was soggy throughout the nesting season and at times was under an inch or two of water. Other birds nesting nearby were Yellowthroats (*Geothlypis trichas*), Redwinged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), Indigo Buntings (*Passerina cyanea*), and Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*). Two Redwing nests were found in the nearby willows.

Mrs. Stamm has kindly prepared the following description of the nest: "The nest is compact and neatly decorated on the exterior with greyish silver-like fiber strands (perhaps milkweed) that circle the nest particularly on the upper part, and are also used to fasten it to the larger stem of the fork. It is a beautifully made nest and seems rather large for so small a bird. Its outside depth is two and seven-eighths inches; inside depth, one to one and one-quarter inches; outside diameter, three inches; inside diameter, two and one-quarter inches . . . It is composed entirely of fine grasses and the greyish fibers mentioned above; it is thickly walled . . . The lining is composed of very fine hair-like, dried, dark grasses . . . The outside is neatly finished save for the back, which



shows some ragged effects of the grey fibers that are loosely arranged."

This summer I visited the Traill's territory of previous years only once, in early June, and did not see the flycatcher there. However, Mrs. H. V. Noland tells me that she found Traill's singing at that location during the summer.

While the Caperton's Swamp area was being kept under observation, another Traill's Flycatcher was discovered 20 miles away, in the far southwestern corner of Jefferson County. There, near Pendleton Road and Brier Creek, and within 100 yards of the Bullitt County line, a Traill's was found singing from a telephone wire on June 30. This location was a low-lying corner of a pasture and was grown up in willows. Since at the time I was unable to spend more than a few minutes in the area, on July 4 I returned to search for a nest, but met with no success. Again on July 16 over an hour was spent combing this small area, but the only nests found were a Cardinal's (*Richmondia cardinalis*) and an Indigo Bunting's; nor was the flycatcher itself seen.

Further indications of the breeding of Traill's Flycatcher in the Louisville area were found in mid-July in Clark County, Indiana, near the Falls of the Ohio. Although these observations are Indiana rather than Kentucky records, they were made quite literally within a stone's throw of the Kentucky line, and within a few hundred yards of the spot where Wiley and I had observed the birds in 1960. On July 16 Mrs. Stamm found a pair of Traill's in a dense growth of giant ragweed mixed with a few willows and Osage orange shrubs. Although the nest was not found, one of the birds was seen carrying food, and the behavior of the pair indicated a nest nearby. On July 20 the Stamms saw three adult Traill's in the same area. Two days later the three of us visited the area, but a search for the nest was again unsuccessful. However, one young Traill's was observed out of the nest on that date.

There were several features common to all the Louisville areas where Traill's Flycatcher was observed. All were among the lowest sections of the region, the elevation of all being between 400 and 450 feet. All were damp locations near bodies of water. All had a dense growth of vegetation, with willow usually predominant. It would not be surprising if a close watch on such areas in other parts of the state revealed that the species is now becoming more widely established as a breeding bird. Probably its inconspicuousness when not singing, the impossibility of making a positive identification of a silent *Empidonax*, its late nesting, and the hot, damp, mosquito-infested character of its usual haunts are reasons why it has not been more often reported.

#### Acknowledgments

Special thanks are due to Mrs. Frederick Stamm, who looked up a number of references, prepared the description of the nest, gave me the use of her notes, and prodded me into finishing this paper. Gratitude is also owed Mr. Stamm for his patience in taking photographs in a mosquito-infested swamp during one of the summer's hot spells. Mr. Norman L. Ford, of the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, supplied a transcription of Pindar's 1886 note in *The Agassiz Companion*, in addition to sending several other references. And my sister Mary Ethel took on the full-time job of digging up and forwarding the notes and other material left behind by her short-sighted brother on the way back to school.

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### SOME SUMMER NOTES FROM THE KENTUCKY MOUNTAINS

by Anne L. Stamm

During two business trips with my husband while he made a survey of mountain schools, colleges, and children homes in eastern Kentucky during the summer of 1960, we traveled 1450 miles in 17 mountain counties from June 27 through July 12, and from August 8 through 12; some of the places were in remote areas on mountain tops and valleys; some could be reached only by means of a jeep. This gave me an opportunity to check on the bird life in this section, particularly on the Parula (*Parula americana*), Black-throated Green (*Dendroica virens*) Warblers, and the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*). Studies from the eastern mountains are few. Therefore, these notes, although incomplete, may be of interest. This paper is not intended to list all birds observed, but rather to set forth some observations on the breeding of several species in mid-summer.

The first three days, June 27, 28, and 29, were spent at Natural Bridge State Park, in Powell County. Lovell (*Ky. Warbler*, 24: 16-17) described this area briefly with comments on some of the birds found one afternoon in June, 1947. As we arrived and walked to the Lodge, a Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*) bobbed up and down on the stone wall to the right of the entrance. It fed each day on the tin roof outside my bedroom window, and carried tid-bits in its bill apparently to young nearby. The first evening there, I was awakened long before dawn by a chorus from the Whip-poor-wills (*Caprimulgus vociferus*); they kept up their repetitious calls along with those of the bull frogs; later the plaintive notes of the Wood Pewee (*Contopus virens*) were heard. The Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) then started a twittering "trem-oo-loo" and soon burst into its melodious song; others joined the beginner; it was difficult to count numbers, as the calls echoed from every direction. The next bird to sing was the Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*), it sang infrequently, punctuated by calls of the pewee. Later a single Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) was heard, and then the notes of a Cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis*) were followed by a Parula Warbler's song. My excitement grew as I checked my watch in the grey mist that clouded the hillsides and darkened the room, when suddenly the notes of the Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virens*) rang through the stillness of the predawn hours at 4:30 a.m. A Chickadee's (*Parus carolinensis*) "dee-dee" was heard followed by the rattle of the Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*). All of this was my introduction to three rainy days that followed. Despite the intermittent showers and wind storms the following breeding observations were made: A Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) fed a young fledged Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) on June 29 along the roadside. On the path to the Natural Bridge, a male Black-throated Green Warbler was observed on a hemlock tree gathering food,

and keeping it in its bill. Lovell reported this species "common in the hemlocks on the lower slopes of the park"; it was the only one of this species I saw here, or elsewhere, although on one occasion its song was heard on the hillsides below the Lodge. Yellow Warblers (*Dendroica petechia*) were observed feeding young birds out of the nest at three different places. In a large hemlock near the Lodge, an Acadian Flycatcher was incubating; the nest was about thirty feet up and on the outer tip of a branch. Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) were feeding young in a nest beneath the bridge that leads to the park. On June 30, Titmice (*Parus bicolor*) were noted carrying food to young that were out of the nest. A Robin nest 25 feet up in an evergreen held an incubating bird. A Wood Thrush nest on June 29 was observed along the road near the cottages; a bird was incubating each time I passed the nest. The Yellowthroats (*Geothlypis trichas*) were common along the vine-covered banks of the road. In the picnic area a Parula Warbler sang incessantly from the very top of a sycamore tree. Lovell did not find it here in June, 1947, but found a singing bird at Cumberland Falls State Park, in Whitley County (Ky. Warbler, 24: 16-17). Some of the more interesting finds were: a Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*), Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*), Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*), Yellow-shafted Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*), White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), Black-and-White (*Mniotilta varia*), Blue-winged (*Vermivora pinus*), and Prairie (*Dendroica discolor*) Warblers, as well as Summer Tanagers (*Piranga rubra*), Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*), and the Song Sparrow. The latter was not common.

At Campton in Wolfe County in the late afternoon of June 30, I found Song Sparrows singing from many places; Yellow-shafted Flickers, Yellowthroats, and Purple Martins (*Progne subis*) were also of interest. We drove on to Jackson, Breathitt County, and found Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) nesting in the gable of Lee's Junior College; the birds were feeding young. About thirty Chimney Swifts flew about the town, and the following morning martins were observed.

On July 1, at Lost Creek, Breathitt County, the Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*) was an interesting find; the White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*), Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*), and Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) sang from the blackberry thickets along the road to the Riverside Training School. Phoebe nested here under the eaves of the school building; parent birds were feeding young. Some of the woodland birds included the Hairy (*Dendrocopos villosus*) and Downy (*Dendrocopos pubescens*) Woodpeckers, Wood Pewee, Summer Tanager, and Wood Thrush. The Acadian Flycatcher, Yellowthroats, and Song Sparrows sang from the banks along Lost Creek, and the calls of the Kingfishers were also heard. The first Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) on the trip was seen near the gymnasium of Riverside School. From here we drove to Buckhorn and Hazard, in Perry County, then on to Hyden and Wendover, in Leslie County. We spent three days in this general area, with headquarters at Hazard. Although the altitude here is only 833 feet, the road from here leads to rugged hillsides, and they are thickly covered with beech, walnut, tulip poplar, redbud, sassafras, and wild cherry. Wild grapes were plentiful. Along Middle Fork of Kentucky River, the Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellowthroat, and Song Sparrow were unusually common.

As we entered Knott County, we found elderberries and giant rag-

weeds growing along Troublesome Creek. Here the swift-flowing water did not keep the Louisiana Waterthrush from foraging along the bank, and one bird appeared unafraid and walked just ahead of me for a considerable distance in the yard of Hindman Settlement School. Here on a large hemlock I found a male Parula Warbler feeding a young fledgling; its call notes were heard the entire morning of July 4. When I showed the birds to Paul Earp, biologist, he said that a Parula (possibly the same one) had been observed feeding five young. There is little information in the literature as to the breeding status of this species in the eastern mountains. Olsen (*Snowy Egret*, 12: 23) lists two summer records for 1936 "one in each of two places where it was last spring: one near highrocks and other along Hollybush Creek (July 5 and June 27 respectively)." He makes no mention of a nest or young. His records are from Pippapass, Knott County, which is twelve miles from Hindman; both of these communities are in narrow valleys, with an elevation of 1032 feet at Hindman and 1100 feet at Pippapass; rugged mountains rise precipitously above both towns. Wilson (*Ky Warbler* 18:17-25) lists it as a rare breeding bird in Floyd and Knott County. Another interesting find at Hindman was the nest of the Song Sparrow containing four newly-hatched young; it was sunken in the ground, flush with the bank, and at the base of a ten-inch stump; it was one foot from the edge of the road that leads to Troublesome Creek. The nest was placed amid violets, sour grasses, plantain, and sweet clover. House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) were feeding young in a nest on the corner of one of the buildings. No Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) were observed in this area. A pair of Bluebirds were noted, and were the first observed since the one at Lost Creek.

In the late afternoon of July 4, we discovered a nest of the Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) in a shale bank along the road near Allen, in Floyd County; the birds were feeding young. Wilson (*Ky Warbler*, 18:23) lists this swallow as an uncommon breeding bird in Floyd and Knott Counties. Rough-wings were also seen at Elkhorn City, and ten miles north of the city in the southern part of Pike County; they were also observed on the lower slope of Pine Mountain. At the Breaks of the Sandy Park a female Indigo Bunting was carrying nesting material, and two fledglings followed her. The notes of the Kentucky Warbler were heard at Elkhorn City, and that of the Prairie Warbler two miles east of Ashcamp, in Pike County. Wilson (*Ky Warbler*, 18:24) lists the Prairie's breeding status as rare in Harlan County, uncommon in Floyd and Knott Counties. I found them singing only in Powell, Pike, and Knott Counties. Song Sparrows were heard from Shelby Gap to Jenkins, in Pike and Letcher Counties. The altitude at Jenkins is 1527 feet, and southwest of here the road passes through valleys and ascends uplifts of the Cumberland Plateau.

We drove on to Pine Mountain, Letcher County, and spent the night of July 5 and part of the next morning on the summit, where the elevation is 2600 feet. Indigo Buntings were numerous on the mountain top as well as on the slopes. Observations of special interest were: Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) feeding three fledglings; Phoebe nesting beneath the eaves of the mountain-top motel; Yellow-billed Cuckoos (*Coccyzus americanus*), Black-and-white and Hooded (*Wilsonia citrina*) Warblers, and Summer Tanagers were also present. Driving southwest of the crest, with the Black Mountains on the left and Pine Mountain on the right, the hillsides were covered with dense timber predominantly

oaks, maple, dogwood, some pines and locusts. The under story was composed of wild hydrangea, wild grapes, solomon's seal, chicory, coralberry, and elderberry. In the open areas sassafras and a few wild cherries and some firs grew.

As one comes down the mountain just east of Cumberland, there is a change in the vegetation; scrub pine predominate here, with some poplars and oaks. An interesting bird at an elevation approximately 1300 feet was a Black Vulture, near Totz, in Harlan County. Warblers on the lower slopes of Pine Mountain included the Prothonotary (*Protonotaria citrea*), Yellow-throated (*Dendroica dominica*), Kentucky Warblers, Yellowthroat, and Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*). On the north side of Pine Mountain in the yard of Pine Mountain Settlement School another nest of the Song Sparrow was found; it was on the edge of a creek bank covered with poison ivy and honeysuckle vines, and just two feet above the water. The parent birds were observed feeding young, and as I neared the nest, a fully-feathered fledgling flushed and fell into the water's edge; no further effort was made to determine the number in the clutch. Details on Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) fledgling were published previously (*Ky. Warbler*, 37:58-59). On the northeast slope of the mountain, at perhaps an elevation of 1700 to 1900 feet, a Junco (sp. ?) flew across our path; this was the only one seen on the trip. On Route 221 near Jensen, in Bell County, a Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) was noted; a single Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*) in the valley three miles east of Jensen was the first of this species noted.

The August trip took us into Clay County, where we stopped at Oneida, then to Frakes, Bell County, near the Tennessee line. From Frakes we crossed over to Ary, in Perry County, and back by way of Jackson, Campton, and Slade.

A Broad-winged Hawk (*Butea platypterus*) soaring over the valley outside of Oneida was interesting, as few hawks were observed in the mountains. A Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) at Ary, and one at Hindman, Knott County, were the only hawks besides the one at Natural Bridge, in Powell County. A pair of Yellow-throated Warblers stayed in the vicinity of the dormitory at Oneida for more than two hours or the length of time I spent there; one bird chased a Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) repeatedly, as birds do when defending a nest. Here, a Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) flew up from the creek; this was the only one observed.

At Pineville, in Bell County, as we stopped for gas, we discovered a dead Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) on the car; the bird was still warm and may have been hit somewhere between Flat Lick, Knox County, and Pineville, as we noticed some weedy fields in that stretch of the road. A Bluebird, our fourth on the entire trip, was seen between Pineville and Frakes on Route 190. At Frakes on August 10 a Song Sparrow was noted carrying food and making repeated trips to a thick hedge row where apparently young were out of the nest or still in the nest. This is possibly the most southerly published breeding record for Kentucky, and its location is about four miles from the Tennessee line.

A Belted Kingfisher at Ary, Lost Creek, and Hindman should be mentioned, as this was an uncommon bird in the mountains.

No owls were heard, although at Hindman one of the reliable residents said that "whip-poor-wills and owls call at night."

Kingbirds were scarce and found at three places: Buckhorn, Oneida, and between Pineville and Williamsburg.

Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) were observed at mountain farms at Frakes and Oneida. Purple Martins were seen in mountain towns where suitable houses were available; gourds and roughly-made houses were erected on posts and six to eight birds were noted at Frakes, Jackson, Campton, and three miles east of Campton. Martins were observed as late as August 11 in Wolfe County.

Parula Warblers were observed only at Hindman and at Natural Bridge State Park. Pine Warblers were found at Pine Mountain State Park and at Cumberland Falls. The Yellowthroats were unusually numerous along mountain streams and valleys.

The Indigo Bunting was very common in the mountain valleys and on hillsides covered with shrubby growth. They were recorded singing as early as 5:00 a.m. and as late as 8:24 p.m. (Eastern Standard time) on July 7 and 8. Not many Rufous-sided Towhees (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) were found except on ridges or mountain tops. The Song Sparrow was everywhere in all eastern Kentucky mountain areas, particularly along the valleys and streams. The species apparently breeds all over eastern Kentucky, as two nests and one other breeding observation were recorded without much effort.

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### THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL FALL MEETING

Nov. 3-5, 1961

The Kentucky Ornithological Society held its 38th Annual Fall Meeting on Nov. 3-5, 1961, at Mammoth Cave National Park. Registration began on Friday afternoon.

At the Friday evening program, an address of welcome was given by a representative of the Mammoth Cave Park Administration. Mr. W. P. Rhoads, K.O.S. president, introduced Dan M. Russell, of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, who spoke on "The Present Status and Management of the Mourning Dove." He discussed the importance of the dove as a game species, its increase in population since 1953, the banding of nestlings and band recovery rate, and some of the studies still in progress.

Mrs. Anne Stamm read a paper by Joe Croft entitled "The Trail's Flycatcher in Kentucky," in which the state records of this species were brought up to date, including a report of observations made in the Louisville area during 1956-61. His account of what appeared to be the first definitely identified nest reported for the state was illustrated by color slides taken by F. W. Stamm of the adult bird, the nest and young, and the habitat area.

On Saturday morning groups led by Dr. Wilson, Leonard Brecher, A. L. Powell, and Mrs. Russell Starr drove to the Great Onyx and Crystal Cave areas, opened to the K.O.S. by courtesy of the park management for field trips.

The business session was called to order by Mr. Rhoads at 3:30 p.m. It was moved, seconded, and passed that the minutes of the 1960 Fall Meeting stand approved as published in the *Kentucky Warbler*. The

minutes of the executive board Meeting of April 8, 1961, were read by Miss Schneider, secretary pro tem. Mr. Rhoads explained the necessary change in the date of the fall meeting. These minutes were approved as read.

Mr. Rhoads reported that after reading the "Wilderness Bill" as mentioned in the board minutes, he wrote to Senator Williams endorsing the bill, and read his letter and the reply he had received.

He reported that the executive board had agreed at its meeting on Friday evening to continue K.O.S. membership in Nature Conservancy. The board had also agreed that the numerous invitations to join other conservation groups would be referred to the members for personal contributions or memberships if they so chose.

Since there was no further old business, Mr. Rhoads called for committee reports. Mr. Brecher, chairman of the endowment committee, reported three new life members, bringing the total to 25. He explained the advantages of this type of membership and mentioned that funds from life memberships are invested and that the interest received helps support the Kentucky Warbler. Mr. Stamm gave a comprehensive treasurer's report covering the past 13 months rather than the usual twelve-month period. (Report attached.) The motion to receive this report, with deepest thanks to Mr. Stamm for his efficient services over a span of several years, was unanimously approved.

The report of the nominating committee was given by A. L. Powell, chairman, the other members being Dr. Russell Starr and Miss Mabel Slack. The following slate was proposed:

President—A. H. Mayfield, Winchester  
Vice President—Dr. Russell Starr, Glasgow  
Corr. Sec.-Treas.—Mrs. James E. Gillenwater, Glasgow  
Recording Sec.—Evelyn J. Schneider, Louisville  
Councillors—Howard P. Jones, Stamping Ground  
Dr. L. Y. Lancaster, Bowling Green

(Mrs. J. Kidwell Grannis, Flemingsburg, and Donald Summerfield, Valley Station, continue to serve another year as councillors.)

The motion to accept the slate by acclamation was unanimously approved.

Mr. Powell discussed the movement to open the national parks to hunting, and felt that the K.O.S. should go on record as opposing this movement. The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously that the corresponding secretary write to the Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, expressing for the K.O.S. vigorous protest against opening the national parks to hunting.

Mrs. Stamm brought up the fact that two years ago the executive board had moved that the K.O.S. urge the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources to work for the adoption of the model Hawk and Owl Law. Since the law was not subsequently amended to protect all hawks and owls, Mrs. Stamm moved that the K.O.S. reiterate its stand and again advocate the adoption of a model law. She mentioned that in some states all hawks and owls are protected because many people do not know the protected from the non-protected species. Mr. Powell seconded the motion, with the suggestion that the K.O.S. action be submitted to Minor Clark, commissioner, Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. The motion passed unanimously.



Mr. Brecher called attention to the Society's sleeve insignia adopted several years ago. Other members spoke of the advantages of displaying this insignia. Mr. Brecher suggested consideration of a K.O.S. car sticker.

After Dr. Wilson mentioned the possibility of our being excluded from the Chaney as well as from the McElroy farm for the usual spring study, Miss Slack suggested that because it is difficult for some members to be away for two week-ends in one month, the spring meeting might be held in connection with the Wilson Ornithological Society meeting at Purdue University, April 6-8. It was agreed that, as has been customary, the time and place of the spring K.O.S. meeting be determined by the executive board.

Mr. Brecher moved a rising vote of thanks to the retiring officers, especially to F. W. Stamm for his untiring work of four years as treasurer, corresponding secretary, and for the mailing of the **Warbler**.

Mr. Rhoads entertained a motion to thank the Mammoth Cave management and the Mammoth Cave Hotel for their concern and efficiency in making our meetings and field trips pleasant and our stay comfortable.

The business session then adjourned.

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The annual dinner was held at 6:45 p.m. in the hotel dining room, Mr. Rhoads presiding. After the introduction of those at the speaker's table, Dr. Wilson outlined the field trips planned for Sunday morning. Mr. Albert Ganier presented to the K.O.S. a framed Rex Brasher print which had hung in Walnut Log Lodge at Reelfoot Lake since the meeting of the K.O.S. there in the fall of 1934. It is signed in the lower margin by all the members then attending. Mr. Ganier had obtained the print recently when the old lodge was torn down and now placed it in the care of Mabel Slack, who had been elected secretary at the 1934 meeting.

Mr. Rhoads then introduced the speaker of the evening, Mr. Bernie Skipworth, a district supervisor of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. After explaining the organization and the work of the department and its various divisions, he showed a sound color motion picture, "The Story of the Mourning Dove," which gave an excellent life history of this species, including the courtship behavior, the hazards of rivalry, weather, and enemies; nest building, incubation, feeding and growth of young, banding of nestlings. This phase was followed by a sequence on the management and hunting of doves. After a discussion period, the meeting adjourned.

The field trip on Sunday morning led by Dr. Wilson across Green River gave everyone the opportunity of seeing the Evening Grosbeak as one of the highlights of the week-end. Several members who stayed until Monday had the good fortune to see the Virginia Rail, discovered by Oscar McKinley Bryens within easy walking distance from the hotel. A total of 54 species was recorded.

Respectfully submitted,  
Evelyn J. Schneider  
Secretary pro tem

# KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Report of Treasurer

November 1, 1961

## GENERAL FUND

Bank balance as shown by last report dated  
October 1, 1960 ..... \$ 340.89

### Receipts

Membership dues .....	\$ 904.00	
Interest Income—Jefferson Federal Savings & Loan Association .....	68.03	
Contributions to the Gordon Wilson Fund for Ornithology .....	5.00	
Sale of <b>The Kentucky Warbler</b> .....	4.00	
Sale of reprints .....	12.00	
Sale of bibliographies, check lists, books, etc. ....	26.26	
Sale of sleeve patches .....	6.25	
Receipts—Fall Meeting—Henderson .....	342.00	
Receipts—Spring Meeting—Bowling Green .....	92.00	
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b> .....		<b>\$1,459.54</b>
<b>TOTAL</b> .....		<b>\$1,800.43</b>

### Disbursements

Printing Costs— <b>The Kentucky Warbler</b> .....	\$ 846.85	
Treasurer's expenses:		
Postage, envelopes, stationery .....	61.58	
Notices, supplies .....	17.53	
State of Kentucky—Corporation filing fee .....	2.00	
Expenses—Fall Meeting—Henderson .....	368.46	
Expenses—Spring Meeting—Bowling Green .....	99.80	
Transfer to Endowment Fund .....	150.00	
Transfer to Gordon Wilson Fund for Ornithology ..	5.00	
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b> .....		<b>\$1,551.22</b>
Balance on hand in First National Lincoln Bank of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, November 1, 1961		<b>\$ 249.21</b>

**ENDOWMENT FUND**

Balance in Savings Account as shown by last report, dated October 1, 1960—Jefferson Federal Savings & Loan Association .....	\$ 591.15
Seven (7) full paid shares—Jefferson Federal Sav- ings & Loan Association .....	700.00
<b>TOTAL—Balance in Fund, October 1, 1960 .....</b>	<b>\$1,291.15</b>

**Receipts**

Life Memberships .....	\$ 150.00
Interest on full paid shares .....	28.00
Interest on Savings Account .....	23.88
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS .....</b>	<b>201.88</b>
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$1,493.03</b>

**Disbursements**

Transfer of interest on full paid shares to General Fund .....	\$ 28.00
Transfer of interest (1960 and 1961) on Savings Account to General Fund .....	40.03
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS .....</b>	<b>68.03</b>
<b>Balance in Endowment Fund, November 1, 1961 .....</b>	<b>\$1,425.00</b>
(Seven full-paid shares \$700.00; Savings Account balance \$725.00; Jefferson Federal Savings and Loan Association, Louisville, Kentucky)	

**GORDON WILSON FUND FOR ORNITHOLOGY**

Balance in Savings Account as shown by last report, dated October 1, 1960 .....	\$ 576.58
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**Receipts**

Contributions on Fund, 1961 .....	\$ 5.00
Interest on Savings Account .....	23.28
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS .....</b>	<b>\$ 28.28</b>
<b>Balance in Savings Account, November 1, 1961, in Greater Louisville First Federal Savings and Loan Association, Louisville, Kentucky .....</b>	<b>\$ 604.86</b>
(Principal of Fund, \$553.00; Accumulated Interest, \$51.86)	

## BALANCE SHEET

as of

November 1, 1961

## Assets:

Cash in bank, General Fund .....	\$ 249.21
Endowment Fund .....	1,425.00
Gordon Wilson Fund for Ornithology .....	604.86
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b> .....	<b>\$2,279.07</b>
<b>Net Worth of Society</b> .....	<b>\$2,279.07</b>

Respectfully submitted,  
F. W. Stamm, Treasurer

\* \* \*

## MEMBERS AND GUESTS ATTENDING THE MEETINGS

BOWLING GREEN: Dr. and Mrs. L. Y. Lancaster, Dr. R. N. Pace, Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Riley, Herbert E. Shadowen, Mr. and Mrs. V. H. Talbott, Dr. Gordon Wilson; BROOKS STATION: Amy Deane; BURKESVILLE: Charles S. Guthrie, Randall Morgan; DEATSVILLE: Cletis Weller; GLASGOW: Mrs. James Gillenwater, Dr. and Mrs. George McKinley, Mary Clyde Nuckols, Burnis Skipworth, Dr. and Mrs. Russell Starr; HENDERSON: Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Rhoads, Mrs. Carolyn Summers, Wiley Summers; LEXINGTON: Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Flynn, Mrs. H. T. Holladay, Mrs. Robert O. Myers, Conley Webster; LOUISVILLE: Mr. and Mrs. Leonard C. Brecher, Mrs. L. E. Colgle, Mrs. C. H. Hardwick, Andrew Lewis, Dr. and Mrs. H. B. Lovell, Henry B. Pieper, Louis Pieper, Marie Pieper, Evelyn Schneider, Mable Slack, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Stamm, Elsie Stewart, Mrs. S. Charles Thacher, Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Wetherell, Audrey Wright; MACEO: Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Powell, Jr., Wilton Powell; MAMMOTH CAVE: W. C. Dilley; MURRAY: Mickey Buzzard, Evelyn Cole, Willard Gray, Dr. and Mrs. Hunter M. Hancock, Clell Peterson, David Ratajik, R. L. Sneed, Walter Taylor, James W. Wilke; PARK CITY: Cleo Hogan; RICHFIELD: Mr. and Mrs. Roy P. Milliken; RICHMOND: Tom Hutto, Dan J. Schreiber; STAMPING GROUND: Mr. and Mrs. Howard Jones; VALLEY STATION: Mr. and Mrs. Don Summerfield; WINCHESTER: Mr. and Mrs. Al H. Mayfield; WHITE PIGEON, MICHIGAN: Oscar McKinley Bryens; NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE: Albert F. Ganier.



Joseph Croft at the Nesting Site of the Traill's Flycatcher.  
From Kodachrome by Frederick W. Stamm  
(See Photograph on Cover)

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## FIELD NOTES

### BARN SWALLOWS USE NEST SIX CONSECUTIVE YEARS

Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) have nested in the same nest in my barn for six consecutive years, beginning in 1956. The barn is 50 feet long and 44 feet wide. The nest is situated on the side of a two-by-six joist which supports the loft above the hall. The nest is eight feet from the ground and fourteen feet from the west end of the barn. It is partially supported by wiring going to a light fixture about one foot away. It has received only minor repairs each year since it was built.

The swallows arrive about the middle of April each year and raise two broods before they depart. I have no way of knowing whether the same pair has occupied the nest more than one year. No other Barn Swallow nests are in the barn. — Charles S. Guthrie, Burkesville.

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### NEWS AND VIEWS

Continued from Page 62

Burt L. Monroe, Sr., our K.O.S. Curator, has recently received two signal honors. In June he was appointed Fish and Wildlife Commissioner of the Third District by Governor Bert Combs. He was also appointed a trustee of the Isaac Bernheim Foundation to replace the late Tom Wallace. He will bring to these organizations a broad knowledge of conservation and wildlife management which should be of great value to them. Congratulations.